

Message Text

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FOR CARTER FROM PA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, OVIP (VANCE)

SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HERewith FULL TEXT GEORGE C. WILSON ARTICLE WEDNESDAY
AUG 24 WASHINGTON POST HEADED "CHINA ARMS BUILDUP HELD NO
EARLY THREAT TO U.S."
2. CHINA HAS OPTED FOR A GRADUAL MODERNIZATION OF ITS
MILITARY FORCES THAT DOES NOT POSE ANY IMMEDIATE THREAT TO
THE UNITED STATES, ACCORDING TO U.S. INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATES
JUST MADE PUBLIC.
3. IN CONTRAST TO DIRE WARNINGS FROM THE PENTAGON IN PAST
YEARS, THE DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY SAID NO MISSILE IN
THE CHINESE INVENTORY CAN HIT THE UNITED STATES.

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4. ALSO, SAID THE DIA, THE IMPROVED LONG-RANGE MISSILE
THAT CHINA HAS UNDER DEVELOPMENT "WILL NOT BE OPERATIONAL
BEFORE THE NEXT DECADE."
5. LT. GEN. SAMUEL V. WILSON, DIRECTOR OF THE DIA, GAVE
THAT REPORT TO A JOINT CONGRESSIONAL ECONOMIC SUBCOMMITTEE
ON JUNE 30. THE SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN, SEN. WILLIAM

PROXMIRE (D-WIS.), RELEASED A CENSORED VERSION OF THE DIA TESTIMONY ON MONDAY.

6. "CHINA'S NUCLEAR DELIVERY CAPABILITY REMAINS WITH A SMALL FORCE OF BOMBERS AND MISSILES" ORIENTED PRIMARILY TO THE PERIPHERY OF CHINA," DIA SAID.

7. THE "LIMITED RANGE" INTERCONTINENTAL BALLISTIC MISSILE THAT CHINA HAS BUILT COULD HIT "PARTS OF" THE SOVIET UNION, THE MARIANAS AND AUSTRALIA "BUT NOT THE UNITED STATES," SAID THE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY.

8. CHINA'S MAIN NUCLEAR-BOMB CARRIER, DIA CONTINUED, IS THE OLD SOVIET TU-16 BOMBER, WITH NO MODERN REPLACEMENT IN SIGHT. ONLY "MODEST QUANTITATIVE IMPROVEMENTS" WERE PREDICTED FOR CHINA'S AIR FORCES.

9. REGARDING FORCES TO FIGHT LESS THAN AN ALL-OUT NUCLEAR WAR, THE DIA'S ESTIMATES WERE SIMILARLY CALM. "THE GROUND FORCE CONTINUES TO EMPHASIZE QUALITATIVE IMPROVEMENTS WITH ONLY SLIGHT INCREASES IN THE NUMBER OF COMBAT DIVISIONS BY 1980," THE AGENCY SAID.

10. CHINA'S NAVY REMAINS FAR OUTCLASSED BY THOSE OF THE UNITED STATES AND SOVIET UNION, DIA SAID, AND WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO PUT UP A GOOD FIGHT "WITHIN THE NEXT DECADE."

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11. FRANCIS J. ROMANCE, DIA'S CHINA SPECIALIST, SAID "IT MAY BE A PARADOX" THAT CHINA HAS MORE NAVAL SHIPYARDS THAN IT IS USING. THEIR IDLENESS MAY STEM FROM A SHORTAGE OF TRAINED MANPOWER TO BUILD NAVY SHIPS. "THE CHINESE ARE THEIR WORST ENEMIES IN THE SENSE THAT DURING THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION HIGHER EDUCATION WAS DECIMATED."

12. AFTER HEARING THE DIA'S TESTIMONY, PROXMIRE ASKED ROMANCE IF IT WAS HIS VIEW THAT "ANY UPGRADING OR MODERNIZATION" OF CHINESE FORCES WILL BE EVOLUTIONARY, WITH "NO DRAMATIC CHANGE IN THE NEAR TERM." ROMANCE REPLIED: "THAT IS CORRECT, SENATOR."

13. IN 1967, FORMER DEFENSE SECRETARY ROBERT S. MCNAMARA PREDICTED CHINA WOULD HAVE "AN INITIAL ICBM CAPABILITY IN THE EARLY 1970S" AND SAID THE UNITED STATES THEREFORE SHOULD BUILD A DEFENSE AGAINST CHINESE MISSILES. LATER PENTAGON STATEMENTS ALSO HAVE OVERESTIMATED CHINA'S MISSILE PROGRESS. CHRISTOPHER

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